

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 134

By Ragan

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor the Clinton 12.

WHEREAS, in August 1956, twelve young African-American students in Tennessee made history as they integrated the first state-supported high school in the South, just two years after the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*; and

WHEREAS, these courageous students, the Clinton 12, gathered at Green McAdoo School and walked down Foley Hill to Clinton High School into unknown consequences, opening doors for generations of African Americans to follow; and

WHEREAS, those courageous students were the late Maurice Soles, Anna Theresser Caswell, the late Alfred Williams, Regina Turner Smith, the late William R. Latham, Gail Ann Epps Upton, the late Ronald Gordon "Poochie" Hayden, JoAnn Crozier Allen Boyce, the late Robert Thacker, Minnie Ann Dickey Jones, the late Alvah McSwain, and Bobby Cain; and

WHEREAS, it is also fitting to recognize the bravery and heroism of Reverend Paul Turner, who served as pastor of the white First Baptist Church of Clinton, for his courageous stand to ensure these students had the opportunity to receive an equitable education as presumed under the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 ruling in *Brown v Board of Education*; and

WHEREAS, theirs is a story that must be preserved and shared, as the Clinton 12 showed great courage that day, maintaining their honor and dignity in the face of bigotry and hatred from outside agitators; and

WHEREAS, the Clinton 12 were instrumental in the peaceful integration of Clinton High School, remaining calm but steadfast in the face of violence and intimidation tactics; and

WHEREAS, the integration of Clinton High School could have been a divisive event in the life of the community, but thanks to the Clinton 12's bravery, composure, and perseverance

in the face of adversity, peace was restored, and the citizens of Clinton united in support of educational equality and against violence; and

WHEREAS, members of the Clinton 12 will receive honorary diplomas from Anderson County School to commemorate this milestone in history; and

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate that we honor the sacrifice of the amazing trailblazers who will forever be known as the Clinton 12; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join with the City of Clinton in commemorating August 27, 2021, as Clinton 12 Day, honoring the Clinton 12, heroes of the Civil Rights Movement, who impacted an entire nation as they courageously took a stand for equal educational opportunities for African Americans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.